



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 2054.0 - Australian Census Analytic Program: Australians' Ancestries, 2001

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### How we see ourselves - the ancestry of Australians: 2001 census

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Of the people in living in Australia in 2001, 36% reported their ancestry as Australian according to a new study based on census data, released today. This was an increase of 14% since 1986, when 22% of the population reported an Australian ancestry.

The study, by Siew-Ean Khoo and David Lucas from the Australian Centre for Population Research of the Australian National University, examines the ancestries of the Australian population. A person's ancestry was determined by asking what ancestry they most closely identified with.

The proportion of people who identified themselves as having an English ancestry declined by 8% between 2001 and 1986, from 42% to 34%. In the same period, the proportion of people reported having an Irish ancestry increased by 4%, from 6% in 1986 to 10% in 2001.

South Australia had the highest proportion of people with a German ancestry in 2001 (7% of the population) and Queensland had the highest proportion of people with a New Zealand and Pacific Islander ancestry (3%).

The study found that the proportion of people marrying outside their ancestry group increased from the first to the second generation and from the second to the third or more generation.

For example, among partnered men and women of Greek ancestry, less than 20% of the first generation had spouses of a different ancestry. The proportion increased to over 35% in the second generation and to 70% in the third or more generation. Similar increases were observed in people of other ancestries.

Australia had a population of 4.1 million people who were born overseas in 2001. Over half of these people spoke only English at home. There were 3.6 million second generation Australians with one or both parents born overseas. For families where both parents were born overseas, 59% spoke only English at home. The majority (93%) of families with one parent born overseas only spoke English at home.

ABS Director of Census Products and Services, Michael Beahan, said this report was issued under the Australian Census Analytic Program (ACAP), which highlights the value of census data in examining social issues within Australia. This program provides opportunities for researchers

to access census data for in-depth reviews. In accordance with ABS policy researchers do not have access to any information that could identify an individual.

Further details are available in **Australian Census Analytic Program: Australians' Ancestry: 2001** (cat. no. 2054.0).

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